

## Report to the State Superintendent's Advisory Council on Rural Schools, Communities and Libraries – January, 2009

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### School news

Educational leadership in southwest Wisconsin – The Pecatonica (Pec) school district has reduced the district administrator position to 60% time. Part-time administrators are now almost the rule, not the exception, in southwest Wisconsin

Consolidation studies – Many districts in the CESA #3 area are interested in these DPI grants. Pecatonica just received one (will study consolidation with Argyle). More districts are discussing an application.

Curriculum – The district passed a recurring referendum in April and is able to maintain our curriculum – even add a few things for gifted/talented students.

AmeriCorps Program for Farm-to-School – the state Agriculture Department (DATCP) has applied for a federal AmeriCorps grant to place more AmeriCorps volunteers in rural communities to help increase school purchase of locally-grown and processed foods. A similar program is already being operated by DATCP – if this is funded it will double the number of communities/schools.

### Community news

Iowa County has formed an Economic Development Corp..... the emphasis of which is micro-business and entrepreneurship. The organization seeks close relationships with our schools and staff will start assisting with a class in the Dodgeville district.

Pecatonica Education Foundation runs the district's first afterschool program – Pecatonica's first ongoing after school program is being conducted by the Education Foundation (recipient of a "Standing-Up" award!). It has an arts-emphasis and serves kids from the elementary school. Basically the programs are run by parents and local artists and coordinated by a licensed teacher.

Pecatonica Education Foundation offers classes for art teachers in the region – In cooperation with Edgewood College, Madison, the John Michael Kohler Arts Center, and UW-Platteville the PEC Foundation is providing classes to art educators to help them develop place-based curricula in the visual arts. Teachers can earn credit through UW-Platteville.

### Library news

PEC Foundation donates to area libraries – The book "Sublime Spaces and Visionary Worlds" (Princeton Architectural Press, 2007) to five local libraries. The book has a chapter on Nick Engelbert, the artist who built Grandview, the folk art environment where the PEC Foundation conducts most of its classes.

"If a man can't be happy on a little farm in Wisconsin, he hasn't the makings of happiness in his soul." Nick Engelbert